

For the first time ever, H.R. 3 would expand the definition of federal funding to include tax deductions and credits of private income or expenses. In other words, current restrictions on government spending would also be applied to the private dollars families and small businesses decide to spend on health coverage. This is an unparalleled reinterpretation of federal funding that could have far-reaching consequences for families, businesses, and even religious institutions.

This bill explicitly prohibits individuals and small businesses that elect a private insurance plan with abortion coverage from claiming certain tax deductions, credits and exclusions for health care expenses, even if that abortion coverage is never used but happens to be part of a plan that otherwise works best for a particular family. Such a substantial change in federal policy would raise taxes on families and small businesses for private coverage that they are already struggling to afford.

This prohibition is also not equally applied to large employers, who can continue offering abortion coverage, creating an uneven and unjust application of abortion policy within the tax code. Further, since the IRS is charged with enforcing taxpayer compliance, this bill raises serious concerns over how the government might audit "questionable" benefit claims by women who receive an abortion as a result of sexual assault or legitimate life-threatening medical conditions.

It is also important to note that taking the unprecedented step of redefining "federal funding" to include the benefit of a tax exemption could raise political and legal questions for churches and other religious organizations which operate under similar restrictions as current law. Many religious institutions either receive segregated federal funds or tax exemptions to run activities such as adoption services, homeless shelters and food banks. This precedent challenges the very pro-life activities that these churches promote.

Although this bill contains many provisions that I do support, it simply goes too far by redefining the very meaning of federal funding.

Finally, we must not lose focus on the truly urgent priorities of Americans right now, namely economic security and deficit reduction. We are five months into this session and Republicans have yet to offer a single bill to help create jobs. I urge my colleagues to oppose the current version of this bill, stop allowing divisive social issues to dominate our time, and turn our attention to the true economic and fiscal challenges in front of us.

HONORING THE FIFTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF FLORIDA

HON. RICHARD B. NUGENT

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 5, 2011

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker:

Whereas, our communities must place the highest value on preserving the role of prayer in our society and government, so that all Americans can continue to enjoy the benefits that our faith has bestowed upon us; and

Whereas, an appreciation for our history encourages dedication to the values and ideals which have enriched our nation; and

Whereas, in the highest traditions of our country, the Fifth Congressional District of

Florida has provided an exceptional example of the power of faith in our society; and

Whereas, on this day, the citizens and leaders of the community are gathered to partake in a non-denominational day of prayer.

Therefore, I, Richard B. Nugent, Member of Congress representing the Fifth Congressional District of Florida, do hereby recognize the district's observance of the 60th National Day of Prayer.

A TRIBUTE TO JACOB POMEROY

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 5, 2011

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Jacob J. Pomeroy for the rank of an Eagle Scout. Jacob is a 10th grade student from South Hardin High School in Eldora, Iowa.

The Eagle Scout rank is the highest advancement rank in scouting. Only about 5% of Boy Scouts earn the Eagle Scout Award. The award is a performance based achievement whose standards have been well-maintained over the years. To earn the Eagle Scout rank, a Boy Scout is obligated to pass specific tests that are organized by requirements and merit badges, as well as completing an Eagle Project to benefit the community. Jacob's project was to construct a barn-themed sun shelter for the Joyful Noise Preschool and the Waukeet United Methodist Church. Jacob also went above and beyond the requirements by completing more than the minimum required number of merit badges.

Jacob has been involved in scouting since he became a Tiger Cub more than 11 years ago. Jacob's father, John Pomeroy, is also an Eagle Scout and current assistant Scout Master to Troop 178 from Waukeet, Iowa.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by this young man and his supportive family demonstrates the rewards of hard work, dedication and perseverance. I am honored to represent Jacob Pomeroy and his family in the United States Congress. I know that all of my colleagues will join me in congratulating him on earning an Eagle Scout ranking and will wish him continued success in his future education and career.

CELEBRATING MAURA MCNIEL'S 90TH BIRTHDAY

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 5, 2011

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 90th birthday of Mrs. Maura McNiel, a leading women's rights activist whose legacy impacts women in Dallas and all over the United States.

Maura McNiel was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota on April 4, 1929 and grew up inspired by integration in Minneapolis-area schools. She moved to Dallas in 1953 and, dedicated to improve the lives of people and the world around her, became involved in the civil rights movement and environmental issues. Soon

after, Ms. McNiel immersed herself in the feminist cause, for which she is applauded today.

The list of Ms. McNiel's activities to improve the lives of others are endless: She spoke to reporters, politicians, organization leaders, and others and had a strong impact wherever she went. She founded Women for Change in 1971, the first women's center in Dallas, and then helped organize the Rape Crisis Center, the National Organization of Women and People for the American Way, Women's Coalition, Family Place (for battered women), the Southwest Credit Union, The Dallas Commission on the Status of Women and the Women's Issues Network.

But it was the personal touch she brought to her efforts that made each one a success.

She famously informed the all-male Rotary Club that just as birds flew better with two wings, marriages worked better as a partnership where both husband and wife shared responsibilities and demands. As her dialogue indicates, her approach was not antagonistic; rather, it was based upon building relationships. And that she did, with the Dallas City Hall, news organizations, and many, many others.

It was this both passionate and rational approach to women's rights that enabled her to successfully fight for Title IX in 1972, which expanded women's education opportunities. She understood that the success of a movement lies not just on its present, but also its future.

More importantly, she knew the importance of following words with action and personal sacrifice. As founding president of Women for Change, which created the first sanctuaries for family abuse victims, Maura took the lead by hosting the first woman in her own home.

A wonderful mother, Sunday school teacher, community leader, effective activist, Maura McNiel's work has led to achievements in women's studies, modern social work, advocacy on behalf of abused women, promotion of the Equal Rights Amendment, and passage of Title IX.

As her representative in Congress, it is my distinct pleasure to honor her today on the floor of the United States House of Representatives. I ask my colleagues to join Maura McNiel's family and friends in wishing her a blessed 90th birthday and continued health and happiness in the years to come.

SUPPORT PASSAGE OF HOUSE RESOLUTION 244, EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THAT A PALESTINIAN GOVERNMENT WHICH INCLUDES HAMAS MUST BE PROHIBITED FROM RECEIVING UNITED STATES AID UNTIL THAT GOVERNMENT PUBLICLY COMMITS TO THE QUARTET PRINCIPLES

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 5, 2011

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my strong support for House Resolution 244, expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that a Palestinian government which includes Hamas must

be prohibited from receiving United States aid until that government publicly commits to the Quartet principles. The Quartet—the United States, the European Union, the United Nations, and the Russian Federation, require Hamas to recognize Israel's right to exist, to renounce violence, and to accept previous Israeli-Palestinian agreements.

Last week on April 27, 2011, Fatah and Hamas initialed a document of understandings as a foundation for a "Palestinian National Accord" agreement, which was signed by all of the Palestinian factions on May 4th in Cairo, under the aegis of the Egyptian transitional government and with the presence of Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and Hamas Political Bureau head Khaled Mash'al.

That same night on Al-Jazeera TV, Foreign Minister of the Hamas Gaza Government, and a member of the Hamas delegation to the Cairo discussions, Mahmoud Al-Zahhar said: "We believe that negotiations with the Israeli enemy are in vain . . . It will be impossible for an interim government to take part in the peace process with Israel."

Mr. Speaker, we should also be troubled by the announcement by a lead Fatah negotiator that Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Salam Fayyad, who has been a leader in developing the Palestinian economy in the West Bank as well as a primary peace negotiator with Israel, will not be a part of the interim unity government.

Hamas embraces violence against innocent women, children, and men and calls for the destruction of Israel in its charter. It has been a designated terrorist organization by the United States since 1995 and by the European Union since 2003. Hamas terrorists have murdered hundreds of innocent Israelis, kidnapped and refused Red Cross access to Israeli soldiers, smuggled Iranian arms into the Gaza Strip, and launched thousands of rockets and mortars into Israel, including more than 300 since the beginning of 2011.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution and reaffirm the notions that a Palestinian government which includes Hamas, a U.S.-designated terrorist group, must be prohibited from receiving U.S. aid. The legislation further acknowledges that the United States House of Representatives has a deep interest in achieving a resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through the creation of a viable and independent Palestinian state living in peace alongside the State of Israel.

HONORING THE 275TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST REFORMED CHURCH OF POMPTON PLAINS

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 5, 2011

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the First Reformed Church of Pompton Plains located in Morris County, New Jersey which is celebrating its 275th Anniversary.

Forty years before the birth of our Nation, a small band of Dutch farmers gathered together in a new land. It was there that the First Reformed Church of Pompton Plains was dedicated on April 7, 1736, under the pastorate of

the Reverend Johannes Van Driessen. The church prospered in its early years, with a membership of 72 by the spring of 1738. A new building was erected in 1771 on land donated by Theunis Dey. This new church building, the first in the community, was located on what is now the Newark-Pompton Turnpike, the site of the present church.

Throughout the years, the church grew physically and spiritually. One hundred years after it was built, the church was enlarged and improved under the leadership of Reverend John Van Neste Schenck. The church was rededicated on November 22, 1871, seven months after its 100th anniversary. It was also on that day that the church family mourned the passing of their energetic minister.

Addressing the needs of members near and far, several small chapels were built. The first, known as Grace Chapel, was built next to the church for the purpose of education. Other chapels were located in various nearby communities, including Wayne, Lincoln Park, and Towaco. Throughout the years many chapels came to form independent churches, most of which remain a part of the Reformed Church of America.

The 1900s brought tremendous growth to the church. With more people joining the congregation, the financial status of the church enabled the construction of a "church house" in 1926, and a fellowship hall, known as "Friendship Hall" in 1965. But the period also brought tragedy. On October 24, 1937, the sanctuary was almost completely destroyed by fire. While the actual cause of the inferno was never determined, faulty wiring seemed probable. The tragic loss, however, brought out the invigorating spirit of the congregation and its dynamic minister, the Rev. Eugene H. Keator. A year and a half later, on April 7, 1939, a new building, larger than the old, with a new steeple and bell, was dedicated. This remarkable historic Christopher Wren-style edifice was completed debt-free.

In 1953, the church acquired the 1788 stone Mandeville home, a one-time Pompton Plains post office, adjacent to the church proper. Today it is the church manse. Along with the sanctuary and Grace Chapel, it is presently undergoing consideration for inclusion in the State and National Historic Registries.

The remains of soldiers from the Revolutionary War to the present find their final resting place in the church cemetery. A walk about the grounds provides a glimpse into the church's vital part in our Nation's rich history. This year, in remembrance of the 150th Anniversary of the Civil War, the church will dedicate veteran's markers identifying more than 600 of our American heroes.

The First Reformed Church of Pompton Plains is a community of faith with "Open Doors, Open Hearts and Open Hands." During this special year, under the spiritual leadership of Reverend Kathleen Edwards Chase, may their spirit continue to rise.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating The First Reformed Church of Pompton Plains as they celebrate its 275th Anniversary.

2011 14TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT ART COMPETITION

HON. MICHAEL F. DOYLE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 5, 2011

Mr. DOYLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the artistic ability of a young woman from my Congressional District, Noël Peterson from the Pittsburgh High School for the Creative and Performing Arts. Ms. Peterson is the winner of the 2011 14th Congressional District of Pennsylvania's High School Art Competition, "An Artistic Discovery." Ms. Peterson's artwork, a charcoal drawing entitled "Organization," was selected from a number of outstanding entries to this year's competition.

In fact, over 70 works from fifteen different schools in Pennsylvania's 14th Congressional District were submitted to our panel of respected local artists. It's a real tribute to her skill and vision that her work was chosen as the winner of this year's competition. I am certain that Ms. Peterson's family is proud of her artistic talents and this impressive accomplishment.

Ms. Peterson's artwork will represent the 14th Congressional District of Pennsylvania in the national exhibit of high school students' artwork that will be displayed in the United States Capitol over the coming year. I encourage my colleagues as well as any visitor to Capitol Hill to view Ms. Peterson's artwork, along with the winning entries from the high school art contests held in other Congressional Districts, which will be on display in the Capitol tunnel. It is amazing to walk through this corridor and see the interpretation of life through the eyes of these young artists from all across our country.

Stephanie Taylor from South Allegheny High School was awarded second place for her Acrylic on Canvas "Rocky." Beth Gonzales from West Mifflin High School received third place for her self-portrait in charcoal. Alaina Schuster from Carlynton High School was awarded fourth place for her painting "Berries." Jessica Clair from Penn Hills was given fifth place for her acrylic painting "Portrait of a Misfit."

In addition, Honorable Mention Awards were presented to works by Nicole Murphy from Carlynton High School, Cody Atkins from East Allegheny High School, Julianna Rinaldo from the Ellis School, Olivia Pasquarelli from Montour High School, Alexandra Fawcett from Penn Hills High School, Alesia Miller from Penn Hills High School, Christopher Winston from Pittsburgh Alderdice High School, Andrew Fusia from Riverview High School, Ethan Lyons from Serra Catholic High School, Brandi Krivansky from South Allegheny High School, Sara Savage from Woodland Hills High School, and Natalie Kerrigan from West Mifflin High School, who entered two mixed media works in the competition and received Honorable Mention awards for both of them.

I would like to recognize all of the participants in this year's 14th Congressional District High School Art Competition, "An Artistic Discovery:" from the Pittsburgh High School for the Creative and Performing Arts, Robert Almond, Sarah Axtell, David Becinski, Zoe Capcara, Noël Peterson, and Nicolette Santercangelo; from Carlynton, Nicole Murphy and Alaina Schuster; from East Allegheny